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## "FIRS" REPORTS ON TONKIN SITUATION

On 17 September, the Vatican organ, <u>Fides</u> published the following communication received from the apostolic vicaria of Hairhong, which is administered by the Spanish Dominican missionaries:

"In the Mon Cay sector, we are subject to the continual threat of invasion by the Chinese Communist partisans. They are now on the other side of the border waiting patiently for the arrival of the Communist troops of Mao Tse-tung. They refuse to join battle with regular Nationalist troops, in order, they say, to avoid massecre and destruction, Actually they are hoping to win without striking a blow for they are counting on the mass desertion of the Chinese Nationalists. Meanwhile, Chinese Communist partisans are threatening to cross the border and invade our Tonking.

"Since northern Tonkin is inhabited by people who are related to the Chinese, infiltration can be made without perception. Since the beginning of the year, groups of Chinese bandits have been disturring our peace by bold raids. On 27 March, they occupied Mcn Cay and seized nearly all the arms. Since then not a single day has passed without some new act of banditry. The fact that these crimes remaintunpunisted is not adding to the wrestige of those who are defending the good cause. Authorities have even committed a crude error which has greatly served the cause of the Communists in Tonkin. These authorities, wanting to blame these troubles on the Viet Minh who are scarcely present in this region, are resorting to reprisals against villages which had neither started these disorders nor taken part in them, but had made the mistake of rejoicing over them. On the other hand, villages which had given refuge to bandits were spared. The most hateful part of this error is that it is the fault of Europeans and serves a propaganda for the Communists.

"In June, the Communists believed that they could take another step, While the regular troops gnarded the frontiers of Tonkin, several thousand well-armed Viet-Minh gathered on this side of Chinese territory, several kilometers from Mon Cay. Today, the Viet Minh Communists, joined by Chinese Communist bandits, are making life miserable in our sector which is now becoming crimion red."

From the same source, a dispetch from Hue gives the following account of Viet Kinh activities:

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"The Viet Minh are continuing to move. They are hindering traffic by sabotaging roads, laying mines, and conducting ambushes. In order to ctep the food supply to Fue, they are blockeding rice in villages, or are buying rice and shipping it elsewhere, thus cutting off the supply.

"During the vacation season, the Viet Minh arrested, in various villages of Ding Hoi Province, about 40 students of the Ecole des Freres du Sacre-Coeur and marched them off into their zones. In Hus Province, students were also carried off to the Communist zones by Viet Minh, who want to educate them according to the Communist methods. In many villages, they are forcing boys and girls, and even small children, to take military drills and to be trained for war. The Communist radio recently announced that they are holding 500 Christians in a concentration camp located in the mountains of Hus for having refused to become Communists. Formerly, the Viet Minh rejected the name Communist, and did not wish to pass as such, but today they openly admit they are no longer interested in nationalism, and that Communism alone can save the country."

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